

of Representatives. This represents the first critical step on the road to U.S. implementation of the Agreement. I hope to win approval of the implementing legislation next week by the United States Senate. The other signatory parties, Canada and Mexico, are completing their ratification procedures.

"This is an historic occasion. The NAFTA will benefit all the people of our hemisphere. It manifests the confidence and optimism with which the United States and our immediate neighbors face the future. It epitomizes our dedication to the development of a cooperative and prosperous post-Cold War world based on open and dynamic economies, a clean environment, protection of workers' rights and expansion of democracy.

"The NAFTA will capitalize on the tremendous opportunities which reforms in Mexico and elsewhere in the Americas have given us to open the way to trade liberalization throughout the hemisphere. As we link our economies we not only will increase the efficiency of production in each country but also will create new, better quality jobs and improve the entire hemisphere's competitiveness in the global marketplace. The NAFTA will set the stage for freer trade and sustainable, more equitable economic development throughout Latin America and the Caribbean for the benefit of our combined populations of 700 million. It will also give an enormous boost to our efforts to complete the GATT Uruguay Round so we can continue to expand the global economy.

"I am grateful for the hemisphere-wide backing the NAFTA enjoys. Your expressions of support, both individual and issued collectively through the Organization of American States, the Rio Group, the Caribbean Community and the Meeting of Central American Presidents have helped me convey to the people of the United States the commitment of Latin American and Caribbean nations to opening their markets so that freer trade may

benefit all. I am proud to have your support in this historic endeavor and I look forward to working with you to make freer trade throughout this hemisphere a reality."

### **Nomination for a Member of the Board of Directors of the Export-Import Bank of the United States**

*November 18, 1993*

The President announced his intention today to nominate Maria Luisa M. Haley to be a member of the Board of Directors of the Export-Import Bank of the United States.

"I have been very impressed with Maria Haley's work over the years, as an aide to me here at the White House, and working for our Industrial Development Commission in Arkansas," said the President. "I expect that she will continue to do well on the Export-Import Bank Board."

NOTE: A biography of the nominee was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary.

### **Nomination for United States District Court Judges**

*November 18, 1993*

The President today nominated two U.S. district court judges for Louisiana: Tucker Melancon for the Western District, and Helen "Ginger" Berrigan for the Eastern District.

"I have pledged to the American people that I would appoint Federal judges committed to public service," said the President. "In Tucker Melancon and Ginger Berrigan, the people of Louisiana will have just that."

NOTE: Biographies of the nominees were made available by the Office of the Press Secretary.